



Nevada Department of Agriculture

Director, Don Henderson

Activities & Achievement Report

June, 2005

Administration

- Additional phone lines and fiber optic cable were installed in the Gomez Building at the Reno Office complex. The Department now rents all of the office space in the Gomez Building, and the phones lines were needed to accommodate additional staff. The fiber optic cable replaces an older copper cable used to transmit data between offices, and has greatly increased the speed of data transfer.

Veterinary Science

- On May 5th and 6th, Drs. David Thain, Anette Rink, Keith Forbes and Dan Crowell attended the Foreign Animal Disease Tabletop Exercise in Mesquite, NV. This meeting was organized by the Department of Emergency Management and the Attorney general's office. The scenario for this exercise was a planned introduction of a zoonotic viral agent, Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (VEE) at a rodeo. The exercise served to familiarize a wide spectrum of city, county and state officials with medical, veterinary, law enforcement and legal ramifications of a bioterrorist attack. Drs. David Thain and Keith Forbes were involved in an advisory capacity in preparing this exercise. Also in attendance was Dr. Paul Ugstad, USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC) for Nevada and California, Dr. Phil Larussa, Assistant AVIC for Nevada and Dr. Scott Beutelschies, USDA APHIS VS area emergency coordinator.
- Dr. Keith Forbes participated in the Rotunda Thunda functional exercise on May 25th.
- Between May 23rd and 25th Mark Smith and Holly Pecetti procured and distributed nine sentinel chicken flocks for WNV surveillance in Nevada. The chickens were purchased in California, processed at the ADL and then distributed to nine locations throughout the northern part of the state. Flocks are located in Dayton, Little Nixon, Mason Valley Wildlife Refuge, Yerington, Battle Mountain, Denio, Winnemucca, Halleck and Duck Creek. All flocks will be part of a biweekly sero-surveillance program throughout mosquito season 2005. So far this year the ADL has tested ca. 400 submissions (dead birds, mosquito pools and equine samples) for the presence of WNV, St. Louis Encephalitis Virus and Western Equine Encephalitis Virus. All samples were negative for arboviral disease. Dr. Dan Crowell will conduct the sampling in the north eastern part of the state, WCDHD personnel and ADL Reno personnel will sample the remaining northern Nevada flocks and Clark County Health Department has established four surveillance flocks in the greater Las Vegas area. All samples are submitted to the ADL for testing.

- Between May 18th and 27th Dr. David Thain traveled to Turkmenistan as part of a Nevada delegation led by the Nevada Army National Guard. Delegations from Nevada have visited Turkmenistan several times over the last 3 years and provided Turkmeni authorities with expert advice on a wide spectrum of agricultural production issues.
- Holly Pecetti and Mark Smith traveled to Modesto, Ca. May 23 to purchase sentinel chicken flocks for the West Nile Virus project this year. The flocks are purchased at a pathogen free farm. Nine flocks of birds are distributed to families across northern Nevada where exposure to mosquitoes that carry the virus is likely. Follow-up testing for the virus occurs bimonthly in the Animal Disease Lab. The sample analysis continues through the month of September or the first frost when mosquitoes no longer pose a threat.
- On May 17, 2005, Holly Pecetti attended an Animal ID Symposium in Boise, Idaho. The meeting was sponsored by the Northwest Pilot Project. Producers, state agency delegates and company representatives totaling 150 participants attended to hear updates on livestock identification, NAIS developments and the progress of premises registration. Holly participated in a panel discussion with representatives from other states to provide updates for Nevada's program. The identification system developed will meet the needs of animal health and producers to regain US beef export markets. To accomplish this goal, the industry needs to progress forward to establish a program in a reasonable and cost effective manner.

Plant Industry

Imported Fire Ants

- Jeff Knight traveled to Las Vegas May 24th to begin the Summer Red Imported Fire Ant Survey in Southern Nevada. This year's survey will begin at the UNLV campus where the last known infestation was known to exist in 2003 and 2004. This was a large area initially, which was reduced to several colonies as the season came to an end last year. Jeff also is planning to incorporate some innovative baiting techniques to increase the detection of this serious pest, particularly when it exists at very low levels and early in the season.

Agricultural Enforcement Unit

- Xenia Duranovic conducted a quarantine action involving a local nursery that offered for sale Hypericum perforatum (noxious weed). All of the sales were immediately stopped and stock seized and collected for destruction. The action was fully supported by the nursery involved.

Pest Control Operators

- The Department hosted the Annual Western States Pesticide Meeting May 10-13, 2005 at Circus Circus Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Approximately 100 officials from Region 8, 9, and 10 representing the EPA, States, Indian Tribes, and the Cooperative Extension attended. Director Don Henderson welcomed the group and both Las Vegas and Reno staff provided support to the overall success of the meetings.
- Lee Lawrence fined a pest control company \$1001.00 for termite pre-construction treatment and record violations.
- Lee Lawrence fined a pest control company \$426.00 for termite pre-construction treatment tagging violations.
- Lee Lawrence held a review committee meeting for un-licensed pest control company. With the requirement of satisfying specific stipulations, the fine was reduced to \$250.00.
- Lee Lawrence suspended a pest control business license of company which lost its Principal licensee.
- Scott Cichowlaz and Lee Lawrence completed the informational bulletin on Tick Borne Relapsing Fever on the Department's web site, and sent a memo to all pest control companies throughout the state regarding the issue.

- To improve communication between the NDOA and USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Lee wrote a memorandum concerning the importance of notifying bidders on federal pest control contracts (i.e. Mormon crickets, grasshoppers) of the importance of possessing a Nevada pest control license before submitting a bid.

Nursery

- Marv Berson completed 54 truck inspections; the majority of the trucks originated in California and were in compliance with S.O.D. regulations. Marv inspected 21 nurseries during the month. All nurseries were free of violations with the exception of a find of possible adelgids on pine. This pest is widespread currently. Marv also completed 5 State Phytosanitary certificates.
- Nursery re-licensing process for the year 2005/2006 has begun. Xenia updated the data base, printed all of the renewals and with the help of the co-workers (thanks guys!) sent them out on 5/31/05/. This year coordinators of the weed and EPA programs, Dawn Rafferty and Chuck Moses sent additional information that pertains to their programs to be included in the mailing and nursery coordinator Peggy McKie included NLA information. Currently the nursery data base has 1041 businesses listed. Xenia also inspected 28 nursery trucks which were all found in compliance and issued 2 state phytosanitary certificates. Xenia conducted one market place inspection and one SITC inspection. Both were found in compliance.
- Marc Olson inspected 10 nurseries during the month of May. 2 nurseries were out of compliance due to improper care of nursery stock. These violations were corrected. Violations of label compliance with respect to germination of grass seed were found in several nurseries. The grass seed was red tagged and removed from sale. Marc Olson conducted one EPA inspection and helped the RIFA crew get ready for the upcoming season.
- Peggy McKie attended a Nevada Landscape Association meeting to encourage their support of the Department's efforts to have the state contractor's board require landscapers to show proof of having obtained a license to sell nursery stock before they are issued a contractor's C10 license. NLA agreed to write a letter of support to the contractor's board. Dave Harvey is heading up this effort and will take the letter with him when he meets with the contractor's board in June.
- Peggy McKie issued a \$700.00 fine to a Reno area nursery for repeated violations of care and condition requirements for nursery stock. The nursery owner paid the fine. Follow-up inspection shows that the nursery is making an attempt to improve the care given to nursery stock. She also issued a Warning Letter to another Reno area nursery for repeated violations of care and condition requirements, as well as failure to control common pests. Follow-up inspection shows a continued failure to meet requirements for care and condition and pest cleanliness.
- Peggy McKie Inspected for and issued two producer certificates
- Peggy McKie met with Nevada certified organic processor to discuss the expansion of the warehouse space dedicated to the storage of organic ingredients and finished products. She met with another organic processor to discuss ramifications of a court decision regarding ingredients used in organic processed products.
- Peggy McKie inspected for and issued a nursery stock inspection certificate for a small wholesale grower in Fallon.
- Peggy McKie inspected for initial certification for an organic orchard. The inspection report was submitted to the program manager for his comments.
- Peggy McKie met on-site with a producer interested in organic certification for a small farm in Reno to discuss program requirements and transitioning conventional acreage to organic.
- Peggy McKie inspected an organic farm for an annual update of organic system plan.
- Peggy McKie worked with Plant Industry Administrator to develop a Department policy that will discourage producer certificates being used for purposes other than the sale of legitimate agricultural commodities produced by the applicant. The policy focuses on the definition of "producer" which requires that the applicant be in the "business" of producing an agricultural commodity.

- Peggy McKie met with the Director, Plant Industry Administrator, Northern Regional Manager and Livestock Administrator to discuss the role of Agricultural Enforcement Unit in Plant Industry inspections.

Seed Certification

- Gary Cross did nematode samples for garlic and did white rot inspections.
- Gary Cross met with Peggy and Davidson's tea on changes in organic standards on synthetic ingredients.
- Gary Cross worked with groups and organizations on 2007 support for seed registration specifically Mines and Minerals and USDA agencies such as Agriculture Marketing Service which enforces the federal seed trade act.
- Gary Cross printed 18 thousand certification tags.

Chemistry Section

- Chemistry welcomes Dr. Wang and Sandhya Garneni to share office space, finally giving Shouhua a desk to write at and a file cabinet!
- Christy Lew has moved the formulation and fertilizer laboratory into the old petroleum lab space and the instruments are up and running. This important move will help reduce cross contamination between the formulation and residue laboratories.
- The chemistry section has acquired a new Gas Chromatograph/Ion Trap Mass Spectrometer. This instrument will be used for trace residue analysis. Sharryn has begun developing and validating methods for termiticides and some herbicides.
- Groundwater analysis is at its peak. Jon Carpenter has been collecting samples in the north of the state, and is on his way to Las Vegas for collection of the southern samples along with Sean Gephart. Christy has extracted all samples in house to date, and they are ready for analysis. The chemistry lab currently analyzes for over 50 pesticides and herbicides in our groundwater method.
- Christy Lew attended the 2005 Midwest Section AOAC Meeting in Kansas City, MO May 23-26. Topic of interest was primarily Feed and Fertilizers. The Subgroup is in the process of reorganizing and developing new metals regulations, updating outdated methods, and lastly implementing new technological advancements.
- Pesticide reregistration is complete. New registrations (of course) continue.
- Fertilizer & Antifreeze reregistration have commenced.

Other Items of Interest

- The Department continues to participate in the planning of a Clark County Emergency Management Exercise named "Rotunda Thunda". This event is scheduled to end as a four day exercise in July 2005 involving State, Federal, and Military support to local government entities. Tom Smigel attended the Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) Conference on March 30, 2005. A draft MSEL was developed which incorporated actions which will involve the Department's Veterinary staff as well as its Animal Disease Laboratory as part of the practice scenario which will include a terrorist release of anthrax along the Las Vegas Strip coupled with many other simultaneous disaster events. Subsequent meetings have included participation by Dr. Keith Forbes and Director Don Henderson. On 5/25/05, Dr. Keith Forbes, Tom Smigel and Marie Virkus participated in a functional exercise from our offices via the Web EOC. Constructive comments are due June 8th to perfect the final exercise in June.
- On May 14th, Dr. Keith Forbes and Tom Smigel set up a booth at the Clark County Health Expo at the Las Vegas Cashman Field Convention area. Public Health related programs administered by the Department

were highlighted as well as numerous general questions were addressed during the day's activities at the Expo.

- The annual pesticide disposal pick up occurred on 05/23/05 at the Las Vegas office. This year's collection effort resulted in more than 4000 pounds of pesticides being disposed of correctly.
- 43 Produce conditional inspection certificates were issued for the month of May by inspector Paul Frigo, accruing \$465.00 in State revenue.
- 28 lots of Shell Eggs comprising 2,450/30 doz. cases were U.S.D.A. Sample Graded by inspector Paul Frigo along with issuance of U.S.D.A. Shell Egg Grading Certificates for the Federal Billing Period 05/01/05 through 05/28/05 and thereby accruing \$1,517.00 in State revenue.

May Weeds Coordinator Report

- Richard Modee chaired and facilitated the May Clark County Desert Conservation Plan Weeds working group (WWG) meeting. The intent of the meeting was to provide a transition and to have Richard introduce himself, present his facilitation style, identify what he expects from the group and give the WWG an opportunity to tell him what they expect from him.
- A Proposed Work Plan for the Strategic Plan was distributed on May 25, 2005 to inform to WWG of the blocks of text that need to be completed in order to complete the Plan by September, 2005.
- A first draft of the WWG Strategic Plan was distributed on May 27, 2005 with a reply due date of 6/9/05 for email comments. The next Weeds Working Group meeting will be on June 16, 2005.
- A Malta starthistle project was initiated in the Moapa area to control Malta starthistle along County Road 168, various private roads in the area, and along portions of interstate highway 15. The project boundary has been established, inventoried and mapped. A photographic record will be kept to document the before, during and after conditions as part of the Effectiveness Monitoring Plan.
- The project will be at no cost, will be implemented by crews currently working in the area. The implementation plan will consist of weed whacking the weeds, leaving them in place for the summer to minimize the translocation of the seeds out of the affected area, and scheduling a pre-emergent spray early next year with a post emergent spray after any new plants have been established but before they go to seed.
- Pulling or clipping and bagging was tested but found to be very time-consuming and difficult because the weeds puncture the bags, get all over clothing and shoes running a high risk of translocation of seed out of the area to remove the material. No suitable disposal site could be identified.
- A catalog of all weed brochures currently being distributed to the public by all agencies is being compiled. In addition, an assessment will be made of other brochures such as recreation or public service type brochures that currently do not have a weeds message included to determine the appropriateness of adding information before the next printing.

Division of Measurement Standards

- The Governor has signed changes to NRS 590 with regards to motor fuel advertising.
- The Governor has signed AB 105 the one-shot appropriation for replacement equipment to increase efficiency.
- Administrator attended Financial Managers Internal Control training.

Bureau of Weights and Measures

- Some critical equipment has failed this month adding additional repair costs.

- Statewide inspections are on schedule.

Program	Number checked May	Number of failures May
Device Inspection	2229	101
Fuel Sampled	129	8
Consumer Complaints	12	5
Other Inspections	229	28

Bureau of Petroleum Technology

- Workshop regarding NAC 590.065 has been established.
- Petroleum Laboratory equipment and staff are operational in the new laboratory.

Wildlife Services

- During the week of May 8th thru May 13th, WS John Peter visited two livestock producers in Northern Washoe County who have had continual mountain lion problems. In the past two weeks a mountain lion has killed one horse, one calf, one dog and injured another horse after a failed attack. On May 9th, WS Peter placed trail snares around the carcass of a pet dog that was killed and fed upon by a mountain lion in a rural homeowner's backyard. On May 13th, a rancher that has been having mountain lion problems reported that a lion had attacked their horse in the early morning hours and reported the situation to WS Peter as he was showing up to check snares that were placed out a few days prior. WS Peter drove past the horse corrals and saw a mountain lion run across the road in front of his truck right behind the location of the livestock damage site. WS Peter released his coyote decoy dogs and after a short pursuit by the dogs WS Peter removed a very large five year old male mountain lion. WS Peter also located two fresh antelope kills that the lion had just made that morning probably after the lion failed to kill the rancher's horse. WS Peter checked his equipment and removed another very large male mountain lion by method of trail snare near the site where the neighbor's dog had been killed. WS Peter found tracks where a female lion was also traveling with the snared male mountain lion. WS Peter confirmed that there were three adult mountain lions all living within a mile area.
- On May 10th, WS Ben Miller assisted an injured man that had a serious car accident in Churchill County. The occupant had been ejected from the vehicle at a high rate of speed and was bleeding profusely from his neck and arm area. WS Miller immediately called 911 and used his government issued first aid kit to find supplies that eventually help stop the bleeding for the victim. WS Miller then covered the man with a blanket and comforted him until emergency personnel arrived. Each year Wildlife Services personnel are often first at accidents and have provided support during those times.
- During the week of May 16th thru May 20th, WS Pete Coates placed out 350 DRC-1339 treated egg baits targeting nest raiding ravens. WS Coates reports that the total raven population on the protection unit has now decreased by 75%, since the raven removal efforts were initiated this spring. Preliminary results indicate that raven damage to sage grouse nests is minimal on the protection unit, but badgers have now been the largest culprit in sage grouse nest depredations on the unit. By saving more sage grouse nests from ravens, it makes for more sage grouse nests available to be located and consumed by badgers. Four researchers from an Idaho University system have radio collars on nearly forty sage grouse and miniature video camera's on dozens of sage grouse nests. This is the only raven removal project in the United States where the United States Fish and Wildlife Service specifically allows for raven removal to protect any upland game bird that is not endangered or threatened.
- On May 17th and May 18th, Jack Spencer Jr. attended the National Annual Mule Deer Convention held in Verdi. There were several presentations regarding the effects of predator removal to help increase mule deer fawn production. There were over 80 of the Nations most noted state and federal Wildlife Biologists.

Livestock I.D. & Agricultural Enforcement Division

- Administrator Connelley attended the Nevada Cattlemen's Assoc. legislative breakfast and spring Board of Directors meeting in Carson City. Issues of interest to the state's livestock owners were discussed with the legislators.

- Administrator Connelley attended a meeting of the Northwest Pilot Project Board of Directors and representatives of the 7 cooperating states in Boise, Idaho. Everybody was brought up to date on the current status of this pilot project for the National Animal Identification System; what was working, what was not working and long-term goals and implementation
- New Brand Inspector II officer, Clara "Toodie" Hancock reported for training in Elko. She will replace Tim Ryan in the Las Vegas area. Ms. Hancock has been involved with animal agriculture all her life and was formerly with the Las Vegas Marshal's office.
- Connelley worked with Assemblyman John Carpenter and Senator Dean Rhoads on re-writing AB 407, a bill addressing government impounding of private livestock on open range in Nevada.
- Connelley worked with representatives from Nevada office of State Lands and the GSL Corporation in finalizing the purchase of an office/warehouse building in Elko for the Department to move into when the Great Basin College begins a new electrical-technology center on the site now occupied by the Department of Agriculture building.
- Brand officers opened an investigation into some stolen cattle out of Oregon that have been reported to be in Nevada.
- Agriculture Enforcement/patrol statistics for the month of April are as follows:
 - 173 vehicles stopped
 - 9 Warning citations issues
 - 1 court citation issued
 - 6 verbal warnings
 - 16 livestock were estrayed
 - 62 livestock were returned or recovered